

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 AGR-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SP-03 STR-08 TRSE-00 SWF-02

CIEP-02 OMB-01 L-03 TAR-02 DRC-01 /087 W

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P 112215Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8086

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT AU PRINCE 1084

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, HA

SUBJECT: GOH SERIOUSLY CONCERNED AT REPORTED EMBARGO ON HAITIAN
COTTON TEXTILES

REF: (A) STATE 120387; (B) STATE 114566; (C) P-AU-P 809

1. SECRETARY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY FOURCAND CALLED EMBASSY
ECON AND COMM OFFICERS TO HIS OFFICE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 11,
TO EXPRESS SERIOUS CONCERN OF GOH AT ACTION TAKEN BY MIAMI
CUSTOMS IN EMBARGOING IMPORTS OF CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF HAITIAN
COTTON TEXTILES. SECRETARY NOTED THAT ACCORDING TO HIS
OFFICIAL STATISTICS HAITI HAD NOT YET EXHAUSTED ITS QUOTA,
BUT STATED THAT UPON RECEIPT OF WARNINGS FROM EMBASSY THAT
STRICTER CONTROLS WERE NECESSARY (REFS A AND B), HE HAD
ORDERED A REVIEW OF THE HAITIAN STATISTICS ON TEXTILE EXPORTS.
THE REVISED STATISTICS WOULD, HE STATED, BE AVAILABLE ON
JUNE 17 AND WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE EMBASSY IMMEDIATELY SO THAT
AN EFFORT COULD BE MADE TO CORRELATE HAITIAN AND U.S.
STATISTICS IN THIS FIELD.

2. SECRETARY SAID THAT ALTHOUGH GOH, IN ACCORDANCE WITH
U.S. REQUEST, HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING ENFORCE STRICT CONTROLS,
SITUATION SOMETIMES DIFFICULT SINCE IN MANY CASES THE
COTTON ARTICLES ARE THE PROPERTY OF AMERICAN COMPANIES,
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SENT TO HAITI FOR ASSEMBLY. REFUSAL OF EXPORT PERMIT

COULD BE CONSIDERED CONFISCATION OF U.S. PROPERTY.

3. FOURCAND STATED THAT HAITIAN INDUSTRIALISTS HAD TOLD HIM THAT THE U.S. EMBARGO OF COTTON TEXTILE IMPORTS FROM HAITI WOULD RESULTS IN 5,000 PEOPLE BEING THROWN OUT OF WORK BY THE BEGINNING OF NEXT WEEK. THIS HE NOTED WAS APPROXIMATELY ONE-FIFTH OF HAITIAN INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT AND THE SERIOUS POLITICAL EFFECTS OF SUCH A DISASTER ON THE HAITIAN GOVERNMENT COULD NOT BE IGNORED. HE POINTED OUT THAT THIS IS SECOND ACTION TAKEN BY U.S. IN SHORT TIME AFFECTING HAITIAN WORKERS (REFERRING TO RECENT EMBARGO ON HAITIAN GOATSKINS).

4. SECRETARY ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY WAY IN WHICH EMBARGO COULD BE REMOVED, AT LEAST UNTIL HAITI COULD COMPLETE ITS REVISION OF ITS OWN STATISTICS AND COMPARE THEM WITH U.S. STATISTICS. REFERRING TO HIS RECENT REQUEST (REF C) FOR AN INCREASE IN THE COTTON TEXTILE QUOTA, THE SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT THE TOTAL PERMITTED HAITI UNDER THE AGREEMENT WAS VERY SMALL, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF HAITI'S POSITION AS POOREST COUNTRY IN WESTERN HEMISPHERE, AND STRESSED FACT THAT THE MULTILATERAL TEXTILE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATED UNDER GATT URGES THAT SPECIAL ATTENTION BE GIVEN THE NEEDS OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

5. SECRETARY ALSO NOTED THAT CERTAIN TECHNICAL PROBLEMS (THE PRICE VARIATIONS IN COTTON/POLYESTER MARKETS EARLIER THIS YEAR AND THE CONVERSION FACTOR USED IN ESTIMATING SQUARE YARDAGE OF SHOE UPPERS) HAD RESULTED IN GREATER HAITIAN EXPORTS THAN EXPECTED.

6. EMBASSY HAS BEEN IN FREQUENT TOUCH WITH BOTH SECRETARY AND UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE OVER PAST FIVE MONTHS ON NEED TO DEVELOP ACCURATE STATISTICS. THE DANGER THAT EMBARGOS MIGHT BE IMPOSED IF EXPORTS WERE NOT STRICTLY CONTROLLED HAS ALSO BEEN POINTED OUT SEVERAL TIMES. NEVERTHELESS EMBASSY SHARES GOH CONCERN AT POSSIBLE POLITICAL EFFECTS WHICH WOULD FOLLOW IF ONE-FIFTH OF HAITIAN INDUSTRIAL WORKERS WERE DISCHARGED IN ONE ACTION-- WITH THE U.S. AS THE SCAPEGOAT.

7. ACTION REQUESTED. (A) THAT AMBASSADOR ISHAM BE SHOWN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THIS MESSAGE; AND (B) THAT DEPARTMENT CABLE MOST DETAILED AND LATEST STATISTICS AVAILABLE OF U.S. IMPORTS OF HAITIAN TEXTILES BY CATEGORY.
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